

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: October 04, 2001

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEC-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265/SA-66)

to: John Baugher - KEW-4
Tom Morse - KEW-4
Fish and Wildlife Project Managers

Proposed Action: Water Right Acquisition Program

Project No: 2001-023-00 (Fifteenmile Subbasin Water Right Acquisition Program)
1999-008-00 (Columbia Plateau Water Right Acquisition Program)
2001-056-00 (Trout Creek 2001 Streamflow Enhancement)
2001-069-00 (John Day Basin Stream Enhancement Project, Summer 2001)

Watershed Management Techniques or Actions Addressed Under This Supplement Analysis
(See App. A of the Watershed Management Program EIS): 4.18 Purchase / Negotiate Water Right; 4.19 File for Instream Water Right.

Location: Fifteenmile, Deschutes, John Day, Umatilla, and Walla Walla subbasins, Oregon.

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and the Oregon Water Trust.

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA proposes to fund four projects that will enhance instream flow in several subbasins throughout Oregon. The Oregon Water Trust acquires existing water rights on a voluntary basis through purchase, gift and water conservation projects, and converts the rights to instream flow under Oregon state water law.

The proposed projects are all related to an on-going program of water rights acquisition in the Columbia Plateau Basin (Deschutes, John Day, Umatilla and Walla Walla subbasins) and the Columbia Gorge Basin (Fifteenmile subbasin) by the Oregon Water Trust (OWT). The current funding cycle extends through fiscal year 2001. Additional funding is currently being sought for fiscal years 2002-2004. Specific acquisition transactions are evaluated throughout the duration of the project, so on-the-ground impacts may only be estimated. The proposed project is an extension of previous water rights acquisition projects within the subject subbasins, dating back to 1994.

The objective of the proposed projects in the next cycle, 2002 through 2004, is to acquire a total of approximately 12.6 cfs on tributary streams within the subbasins. The target level of water rights acquired, by subbasin, are as follows: Deschutes subbasin - 2.0 cfs; Fifteenmile subbasin - 1.4 cfs; John Day subbasin - 2.0 cfs; Umatilla subbasin - 1.0 cfs; Walla Walla subbasin - 4.2 cfs; and newly prioritized streams within the region - 2.0 cfs.

Analysis: The compliance checklist for this project was completed by Andrew Purkey and Cheyenne Chapman of the Oregon Water Trust, and meets the standards and guidelines for the Watershed Management Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD).

Several species of fish listed under the Endangered Species Act will directly benefit from the proposed projects. In addition, the benefits of enhanced instream flow extend to locations downstream from the project areas. The National Marine Fisheries Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have concurred with BPA's determination that the proposed projects will benefit the following ESUs: Oregon Coast coho; Southwest Washington/Lower Columbia River coho; Lower Columbia River chinook; Upper Willamette River chinook; Upper Columbia River spring run chinook; Snake River fall chinook; Snake River spring/summer chinook; Columbia River chum; Hood Canal summer run chum; Snake River sockeye; Upper Willamette River steelhead; Middle Columbia River steelhead; Upper Columbia River steelhead; Snake River steelhead; Lower Columbia River steelhead; Oregon Coast steelhead; Southwest Washington/Columbia River Cutthroat Trout; and the Columbia River Population Segment of Bull Trout.

OWT uses a science-based methodology and works in consultation with the Oregon Water Resources Department and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to target stream systems and reaches where streamflow is a limiting factor and where irrigation withdrawals impact fish production and survival. OWT investigates the priority of water rights and monitors irrigation use in the vicinity of their acquired rights, to ensure that instream flow is actually enhanced. The Trust has adequately considered the benefits and drawbacks associated with acquisition of water rights, which are identified in the Watershed Management Program EIS.

Findings: The project is generally consistent with the Northwest Power Planning Council's Fish and Wildlife Program. This Supplement Analysis finds 1) that the proposed actions are substantively consistent with the Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265) and ROD, and, 2) that there are no new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the proposed actions or their impacts. Therefore, no further NEPA documentation is required.

/s/ Richard R. Yarde

Richard R. Yarde
Environmental Specialist

CONCUR:

/s/ Thomas C. McKinney

Thomas C. McKinney
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: 10-04-2001

Attachments:

Checklist

Letters of concurrence from NMFS, FWS

cc: (w/ attachments)

Andrew Purkey
Oregon Water Trust
111 SW Naito Parkway, Suite 404
Portland, OR 97204